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Description/Subject: Gene Poor with help from friend David Nagy designed and built a one third size bowling alley and with automatic pin setter. Poor was a senior at Kent State University and would travel home on weekends to build the project.

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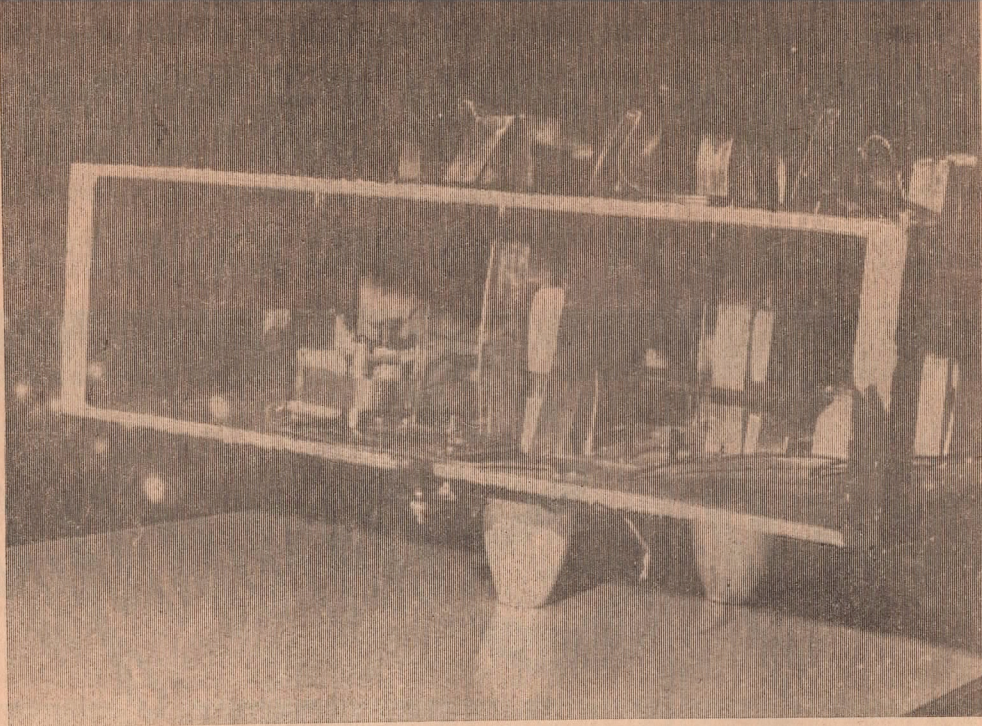
Feature on the pin setter project designed and built by Gene W. Poor.

As a senior at Kent State University, Gene W. Poor—working with longtime friend David Nagy—designed and constructed a fully functioning one-third-scale bowling alley complete with an automatic pin setter. Poor traveled home on weekends to build the project piece by piece, applying creativity, mechanical problem-solving, and hands-on engineering to bring the design to life.

The miniature alley quickly drew public attention for its craftsmanship and ingenuity, and became an early example of Poor's lifelong pattern: identifying a challenge, imagining what others hadn't, and building something remarkable from scratch.

Digitized and preserved for educational and historical reference by Dr. Gene W. Poor, November 2025.

A feature on Gene W. Poor's one-third-scale bowling alley and automatic pin setter built as a senior at Kent State University.



Homemade Pin-Setter In Basement Lanes

Elyrian Has New Idea In Basement Building Project

By TOM PRY

ELYRIA — Most basement building projects involve model airplanes, home-made furniture or amateur radio sets.

But for Gene Poor, a 22-year-old senior at Kent State University, it involves a scale-model bowling alley, complete with automatic pinsetters.

His project, built in the home of his aunt at 943 N. W. River St., represents about 1,000 hours of work, some 800 feet of wiring, more than 5,000 screws, and 11 motors.

THE ALLEY, including the pins and his one junior-sized bowling ball (without finger holes), is scaled to one-third the size of a regulation alley.

It's entirely his own design, although he had some help from his friend, Dave Nagy.

Elyria Girl Hurt, Struck By Auto

ELYRIA — A five-year-old girl Monday afternoon received a broken leg and other injuries when she dashed in front of a car at Ohio and Glenwood Streets.

Colleen Kenyon, 270 Harrison St., was treated at Memorial Hospital and released. Police said she suffered injuries of the forehead, ribs, back, left hip and right knee.

The driver, Patricia Lynn Dobbins, 17, 383 Longfellow St., was not cited.

The alley has little to do with his plans, which are to teach. He is majoring in industrial arts.

He lives with his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Dolle Gilbert, and his mother, Mrs. May Kennedy, at 715 Bond St.

His alley, which looks like something from the drawing board of Rube Goldberg, utilizes 20 miniature pins and is built in three sections — "for portability."

THE 1,000 hours spent wiring the dozens of motors, switches and other gadgets hasn't slowed him down, either, as he already is thinking about another alley. "I'd like to build a better one next time," he says.



Gene Poor Trys Out His Bowling Alley